

**GRIME: Transforming Subculture and its cultural identities**  
**-Based on fieldwork in London-**

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## 0. Abstract

Subculture has the role to become the identity of each person or community and to protect and reinforce their existence, heterogeneity and messages beyond its commercial aspect as contents of music or fashion. This thesis focuses specifically on grime as concrete examples, and it does not have the aim of making an abstract and comprehensive conclusion about whole general subcultures. However, this study would like to explain this social significance to show its perspective. From those points of view, the object of this thesis is analyzing what roles does grime play for their members and society.

This thesis is mainly based on the methods of cultural studies. To understand how vital their cultural identity is in community and society, it analyses grime's background, attitude, style of music and transition from local culture to mainstream success and associate with social causes and effects. Especially grime is still in a transition period from local youth culture to international mainstream culture. Because it is challenging to demonstrate academic arguments about grime, this study is based on empirical data from fieldwork about grime in London,

Grime was/is treated as fringe cultures, which departed from society. That was because that culture became their rigid identity to protect their existence and messages; on the other hand, that protection could be understood as hostility by society. However, they have been gradually accepted by society when their commercial contents have succeeded to become mainstream. Some of the members of youth culture regarded this change as acceptance of their identity in society in a positive way. Others considered it as alienation between local identity and commercial contents in a negative way.

Those separations of opinion are, generally speaking, an argument of "authenticity of culture". However, from the point of view of this thesis, both ideas are trying to find an appropriate relationship with a society based on their cultural identity. Even though subculture has fluidity, which could cause an argument inside and outside of that culture itself, it always has the role of supporting their identity and establishing a relationship with society.

## 1. Introduction

### 1-1. Subcultures in societies

It is challenging to make a definition of "Subculture". One reason is that the boundary of subculture is very vague. There are an enormous amount of subcultures currently and historically. They might be a subculture about music, fashion or literature. Moreover, many of them are mixed up of many different types of cultures. Therefore it is already difficult to define what is a subculture. When it comes to the question "What is subculture?", there might be an answer "subculture means counter-culture." That is based on the definition that subculture happens as a movement against the "high-culture". Now there is a question "What is the high-culture." In many societies, there is no more aristocratic culture. Of course, there is still a difference between a culture which cost a lot and which does not, but they are already just the difference of choice.

And then there is another reason why it is challenging to make a definition of "subculture". It is that each of these many subcultures is kept changing themselves; each cultural style is fluid. For example, Japanese manga or otaku culture used to be a tiny / niche culture. However, as everyone knows, it spread all over the world. It might be still a counter-movement to high-culture like mainstream films or Tv shows. However, there is the no longer strong bias that anime/otaku is worse than these mainstream culture. It seems both are just equal options. In addition, there must be different context about anime/otaku culture in Japan and the US and Europe and so on.

This chapter tried to show two reasons why subculture is challenging to define. Firstly, it is because the difference between other "cultures" is vague. Secondly, it is also because subculture itself keeps changing, then it is difficult to apply one definition.

And then, what is the role subculture is playing? There must be many roles—however, this study focuses on the role that subculture makes social identities of new generations. Subcultures often establish new generation's identities, new generations change the society, and hence subculture changes the society. From a different perspective, subculture is a more accessible and cheaper weapon for minority or weaker groups like labours, immigrants, and so on. Cultural movement can give those people tools to deliver messages to society or even resist to powers of the system. From this point of view, subculture directly shows their lives and the society they exist in.

This research focuses on specific subcultures, grime, which complexly contains a unique style of music, fashion or socio-political background. They usually put stress on the importance of "authenticity" about their styles. These characteristics make subculture sharply differ from other cultures.

Culture is not one sublime part of lives for wealthy and sophisticated people. Culture essentially includes all of the people's lives as politics, religion, economy and social activities. When it comes to youth culture, it shows more directly its members' lives. In addition, youth culture itself makes their strong identities and become their voice and lifestyle itself.

## 1-2. The object of this study

From the comprehensive perspective, the object of this study is to show how subculture plays a role in the society; this study sets a hypothesis that subculture can play roles of being identities of members of society. However, as the previous section showed that it is difficult to generalize all subculture. Therefore, this study picks one specific example of subculture and use it for discussion.

It uses Grime as an example of a subculture which was born and grown up in London and spreading. Grime is an ongoing tribal culture, which might be the identity of black (mainly who has roots from Caribbean immigrants) community in London. The characteristics of music seem similar to Hip-Hop music, but it is historically and musically unique culture from east and south suburbia of London. As this origin shows, it has represented London's "black" music and nowadays it is even not local music scene but mainstream music in the UK. However, there are still severe stereotypes black community in east and south London.

Hence, the object of this study is to analyze how Grime was born and grown up in local communities in London and also discuss how it can be identities of members. Through discussion about their identities, this study aims to find clues of "how subculture becomes the member's identity" and more deeply "what is cultural identities". It shows how youth culture is important for specific people's identity and lifestyles. Furthermore, it would show clues to understand how any subcultures have essential roles in society.

This study is based on the author's fieldwork. The original aim of that research is planned as this section's object. However, actual discussion led from fieldwork is not precisely the same as this original object. It might not be comprehensive testing of original hypotheses. Discussion based on fieldwork is more about "authenticity of cultural identity". Because subculture, especially which is formed from the local community, often has a spirit of authenticity. This authenticity positively enforces its unity of the community, and it works as pride or protection of its culture and community. However, this argument of authenticity negatively actualizes the division between different opinions about that community.

## 2. Method

### 2-1. Cultural Studies

The study method, which this thesis follows, is mainly based on cultural studies. Graeme Turner defines cultural studies as ;  
"dedicated to the notion that the study of cultural processes, and especially of popular culture, is important, complex and both theoretically and politically rewarding" (Turner, 2002)  
Following this definition, this thesis also focuses on the cultural process of grime consider that relationship with the socio-political realm. In addition, this thesis strongly focuses on personal identity, which is formed by subculture, and this point is also following cultural studies discussion.

### 2-2. Fieldwork

There is a significant obstacle to studying about growing subcultures. It is the rarity of previous researches because it takes a long time to complete academic researches. This study tries to overcome this obstacle by carrying out empirical fieldwork. It can succeed to avoid depending only on academic references. That fieldwork aims to make contact with local people who are committing Grime. The author accomplished the fieldwork during staying in London for nine months from September 2017 to June 2018. Because this article mainly depends on personal fieldwork which author accomplished, this study may be biased by personal perspective.

Furthermore, there is also a limit of international student for accomplishing fieldwork in few months and gather real information from local members. Therefore this thesis is close to the style of personal records of fieldworks. In order to prevent mixing up personal perspectives and academic discussions, this study separates description methods between two of them. For academic discussions, it uses standard thesis format. Moreover, for fieldwork records, it uses field note with framed description. Example field note, which argued about these methods of this fieldwork and difficulty of it is shown in following.

## Field Note

### • Boundary of subculture

When trying to research as close as possible, I found out its real difficulty. Is it because of grime is subculture? Or grime is local and unique with an ethnic group? Or do I have a strong bias to these members?

There is a boundary between WHO actually involve in subculture and WHO is interested in that subculture, especially researcher.

There are two aspects of this boundary: time lag and information.

First, if the researcher is outside of the subcultural community, it is some moments (could be some weeks or even year) when you can research what happened or changed in that culture. That is the reason why it is difficult to find academic research about ongoing subcultures. Secondly, there is also a difference between HOW that subculture looks like through the research and WHAT it actually is. This is because information, which you can get outside of the boundary, is limited. It tends to be affected by media or the mainstreamed version of that culture. On the other hand, what the subculture actually is NOT commercialized, NOT mainstream, NOT academic and NOT biased by media. However, still, this information is only inside of that exclusive community.

When it comes to fieldwork method, there is both positive and negative effect for both of you are inside of community or outside of the community.

If the researcher is outside of the community; Objective view.

/You can research Safe but it could be far from reality.

/You can research in objective view but it could be biased view.

/You can research connect to other opinions(?)→same as an objective view

if the researcher is inside of the community.

/you can research real, but it could be a lack of objective view. too subjective?

/you can company with them, but it could be a lack of objective view. too subjective?

/You can get original information.

↑

Considering "inside of the community might be unsafe, and outside is safe" is strongly biased.

### 3. Ethnographic background

Following definitions of terms, it is also necessary to define what grime is. Briefly, there are two main elements of grime culture. These two characteristics, ①Ethnographic backgrounds, ②Musical characteristics, make grime unique from other cultures. This chapter shows the ethnographic background of grime before musical characteristics in the following chapter.

There are many examples that subcultures are connecting with ethnography, or they have ethnographical characteristics. When it comes to grime, it is also necessary to associate its background with ethnography. There are two aspects of the ethnography of grime. One aspect is "ethnic roots", and the other aspect is "urban location" (it is actually caused by "ethnic roots"). These two aspects are not separated, but both are intertwined. Moreover, both are connected with economic distress, racial abuse or even violence. Grime's ethnic root is getting less determinate with this it is growing. Nowadays, grime became not only just a representative of a single ethnic group at all. However, in terms of cultural studies, it seems necessary to go upstream to their root, Black British identities.

According to Barron (2013), grime's root is like the following:

significantly, many of these artists produce distinctly ethnic perspectives based on Black British ethnic identities and, in many instances, by the descendants of labour migrants to the UK in the 1950s who ultimately formed working-class populations housed in the inner rings of London estates such as Paddington and Brixton. (p.7)

Grime artist is mainly from London's urban (inner rings) area. They are usually born in those areas and hold British citizenships. Therefore it is not that simple as grime's ethnic identities are derived from Black British immigrants ethnicity. It all depends on each individual how intense connection with their ancestor they find. However, distressing situation, which their parents' or grandparents' generations faced in London after immigration, led to the forming of strong ethnographic identities of (at least early years) grime artists. As Hall's study (1978) revealed about this distressing situation as: "These populations faced not only the rigours of low-paid employment but also racial abuse and violence from sectors of British society."(Hall et al., 1978: 349). Grime is not always lyrically mentioning about these historical struggles of their ancestors. However, these situations led to current treatments for Black British population in London's suburbs.

Barron's (2013) study also describes grime artists' ethnic identities and relations with historical, social treatment as;

Consequently, many grime artists are the inheritors of their parents' grievances of specific inner-city [racial] populations' in 1980s, Britain and a culture that constructed the



'black presence' as a 'threat' to the homogenous "white, national 'we'" (as cited in Gilroy, 1992: 27, 48). Moreover, grime music intimates that the moral panics directed towards specific ethnic communities in the 1970s and 1980s remain prevalent within these ethnic urban spaces, in the form of knife-crime fears and youth-created disorder (exemplified by the rioting and civil unrest that occurred within London in 2011). Historically, a significant political and institutional response to the panics amplified by newspaper reports, as Hall et al. (1978) argue, led to robust action. (Barron, 2013, p7)

As these previous researches show, there are constant conflicts between the Black British community and White British community in the urban area of London. These kinds of ethnographical backgrounds strongly affect to grime's cultural style and identity. This study focuses on the current cultural style, current attitudes and current identities of them in the following chapters. However, these historical and ethnographical backgrounds are always related to all of these perspectives.

#### 4. Cultural characteristics

This chapter introduces the Cultural characteristics of grime. As the beginning of the previous chapter mentioned, equal to ethnography, musical characteristics of Grime is also unique. However, it is pretty challenging to present a clear definition of the musical characteristics of grime. It is often mixed up with Hip-Hop. Especially the most misleading explanation about grime is that grime is the UK version of hip-hop. It uses the comparison of the US culture and UK culture and effortlessly defines hip-hop as US culture and grime is the counterpart of hip-hop in the UK. However, grime and hip-hop are different in the way of formation and in the way of music. Before showing grime's formation and its musical uniqueness, it is also needed to mention that there is another music genre "UK hip-hop". This is a different genre from grime and quite equal with "UK version of hip-hop". It is because UK hip-hop has formed directly affected by US hip-hop in the late '80s. This is much earlier than grime formed in the early 2000s. Moreover, UK hip-hop does not have a distinct ethnic background. It was already cross-racial culture, unlike early US hip-hop or grime.

Originally grime has emerged from UK garage scene. In the mid-'90s UK, garage was rising in an underground music scene in London. "UK garage" is an electronic music genre which is a blend of garage (electro music like house music), Jungle (electro music emerging from breakbeat hardcore scene), Reggae, Drum n Bass and also hip-hop. And then early 2000s there has been many UK garage parties, some have been rave parties. In that kind of underground music scene, grime was born. Mcs in UK garage parties started to do rapping

and gradually started to play the lyricist roles. That is the reason why "rapper" of grime music is called "grime mc". This forming of early grime music is quite similar to the early days of US hip-hop. US hip-hop has also emerged MCs started to rap in block parties and become a rapper. Even though there are many similarities between grime and hip-hop and also a comparison of those two must lead meaningful discussions, this study mentions only that these two music genres have different roots.

In BCC interviews, early days grime artist mentioned about grime, UK hip-hop and US hip-hop as;

The UK hip-hop scene will not surpass the American simply because it is not authentic enough to be considered seriously. That is why UK hip-hop floundered so spectacularly in the 1990s. They never gained enough credibility and authenticity to appeal to the masses. Now Wiley, Sway, Roll Deep and others have created their genre of music - grime. It is authentic, raw, and is the new London sound sweeping the underground. Grime has its language and tells its own story about life in urban Britain. Grime is not trying to be American. The artists do not sound like Americans. Grime music will be massive in the next year or two. Ashleigh, London, UK. (Youngs, 2005)

These kind of unique origins are the most distinctive cultural characteristics of grime music. Because of this kind of musical root, grime is often categorized as a type of electro music. Even though there are minor differences from other musical cultures, these boundaries between genres are getting blur and blur. One thing that must be noted is that nowadays, grime scene and US hip-hop scene are very close. This fact often leads to mixing up of both genres. The interpretation in this study is that grime is music genre originated in the UK especially suburb of London and has a different root from US hip-hop, however, after growing up until mainstream music both music genre has got closer.

## 5.Social Treatment and Attitude

Social treatment to grime tends to be negative. There are quite strong stereotypes and bias about the Black British community in the suburb of London from outside of its community. Even though London is a worldwide class of the multicultural city, it does not mean there are no biased views. London's multicultural situation has double layers. The first layer is the economic level of the multicultural situation. London is the centre of economy and business and (commercial) culture in Europe. Many populations gather from all around

the world to work. In that layer, multiculturalism seems to succeed. However, there is another layer of the multicultural situation around London, which includes the Black British community. Immigrant population and their decedents mainly form that layer. About this layer, there are many ethnographic groups. Black British community is often treated with biases that its group connected with crimes in suburb London, even there is no fixed evidence. Therefore social treatment to grime is biased as connection with crimes.

This kind of adverse treatment is not only from civilian but also from a governmental level. There was form 696, which is a risk assessment form which the London Metropolitan Police requests promoters of events and licenses of these events to complete 14 days before any event in 21 London boroughs. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the grime scene was stemmed from the underground party scene. Because of this, it is not easy for grime events producers to complete every information such as "every single performer". As a style of grime shows, there might be guest grime MCs who did not plan to perform in advance. Even freestyle show is not exceptional in grime shows; these kinds of strict form is not fair to keep grime's freedom of expression.

#### Field Note

"Novelist Guy" release show

by Novelist

@Bermondsey Social Club

26 Apr 2018

To be honest, I had some kind of hesitation to go to grime gig/show. Their "reputation" seemed not that good. For example, crimes and drugs. Even there was a sort of political regulation such as form 696.

many shows/ gigs venues were shut down because of that form.

I arrived at the venue, Bermondsey Social Club, on opening time which was written. However, It had not opened yet—that venue places beneath the train rail. I need to walk through a narrow and dim path to get there.

It made me actually scared. Because the venue had not opened yet, the entrance guard told me that I should have come back 1 hour later.

I went to a pub around 5 minutes from the venue in order to wait. It was also because waiting

on the street did not seem the best. I was told that the street which does not have a pedestrian is quite dangerous in London by local friends.

In the pub, there is live music stage probably for jazz, and there were some old and "posh" couples. I found a strong contrast.

One hour later, I went back, and the venue has been opened. That show was totally different from what I expected. Opening DJ was a woman. The audience who were already there was mainly black people, but It seemed not all of them have Caribbean roots. Some seemed to have white roots, Indian roots, middle-eastern roots and more.

What I was surprised most was that before the 1st act had started playing. Novelist himself came out from backstage and speaker to each audience. He also has talked to me. I had a stereotype to grime MC that they are more overbearing. Moreover, I did not expect they would talk to the audience who never met before because local bond seemed something exclusive for me.

He was opposite of my stereotype. Even I did not feel any "thug" mood from him. He was 21 years old, at that time, the same age as me. However, he was an adult who is polite, gentle and humble.

He also watched and enjoyed other support acts' shows from the front row and even joined into their performance.

Moreover, before his stage started, he asked for the audiences that do we have any questions about the new album. Furthermore, literally "talked" about his album.

He was becoming one of the central act of the grime scene. However, I felt that the show was "not too exclusive" and also "not too commercialised". I doubted "Binary conflict" which I expected in this grime scene.

He still has a strong message. However, his attitude is not against everyone else and not violent at all. His lyrics or his way (he owns his label by himself) is still symbolised their D.I.Y and rebellion spirits. However, he is also open to major/ mainstream scene.

More like he straightly tries to show his real/honest way go music/message to the mainstream without any hatred.

Like this fieldwork experience, there might be totally different perspectives between from inside of grime scene and just stereotypes from outside. Also, the attitude of grime is "controversial" depends on which perspective one's have. From inside the community, these kinds of energetic expression enforce the unity of the scene, and it is full of love for the family and the neighbourhoods. Therefore its attitudes are the protection of its scene and even its community. In addition, even that protection is required because another majority is trying to exclude them to the "society". On the other hand, when you are standing on the perspective of the naive majority of London society. Their attitudes can be "too aggressive" and "exclusive".

In the lyrics of grime song "Shutdown", they quote from online criticism about grime scene "A bunch of young men all dressed in black dancing extremely aggressively on stage, it made me feel so intimidated, and it's just not what I expect to see on prime time TV" (Skeptta, 2016)

Hence, grime's attitude can protect its community but also make misunderstanding of itself. However, as this fieldwork shows, it is not so difficult to solve this misunderstanding.

These attitude of rebellion is often compared with the punk scene in the '70s. There are many similarities between grime and punk. However, to catabolize easily is not that proper to discuss these two cultures.

#### Field Note

- Grime vs Punk

Media sometimes describe grime as "new punk" because of these sociocultural similarities.

However, grime is grime. Punk is punk.

Grime does not need to be "New Punk".

This research is not for placing grime as "new punk". It compares grime and punk because of both have a certain amount of similarities.

which is;

/ it was local underground culture and became mainstream

/spirit of rebellion.

And so on.

## 6. Transformation

Nowadays, grime is not a "local" music scene at all. It commercially succeeded. Many grime artists won many prizes, which include prizes for black music like MOBO awards and even Brit-award. Moreover "members" of the grime scene has been spread wider and wider. That boundary is outside of suburb of London. Even not only in London. It can be said that grime became commercially and musically mainstream culture. It is not such as "negative result" at all because accepting from mainstream culture is quite close to acceptance from mainstream society. However, there is a conflict between two opinions about grime's authenticity.

Field note

How grime can spread on-line and become mainstream.

It had venue problems. (because of form 696)

↓

The scene has grown up more on on-line rather than real venues.

↓

Easy to access

↓

That removed obstacles which include biased view such as the grime community is connected to the crimes.

↓

make it more universal

↓

(could cause less authenticity?)

## Field Note

Native Session (commercialized/mainstream events.)

Native Session; Bar (Grime +UK hip hop)

@Barbican Centre 18/4/11

Workshop/ Event for producers (who make tracks) and who uses gadgets.

=representation of grime/UK rap becoming mainstream, commercialised.

B.C. they neither of that event and participants shares original identity with the grime community.

The event itself is mainly about the technical aspect(tools, instruments, software) of grime/UK rap.

The primary purpose of participants was also a technical aspect.

Participants share, mixed backgrounds (not only black or Carribean roots)

young age seeking to be professional.

Meeting with new people is also one of the purposes of participants. But not like local connections. They need to find who working with because they do not belong to local grime community. Alternatively, it is already exclusive because of commercial success.

This event has similarities with instrumental /tech showcase in the rock music industry(any big mainstream music industry which has a significant amount of amateur players.) this showcase shows how these music are commercialised, not only for the listener but also for players.

It also shows that the grime scene is treated as PURE music. Grime in subcultural context includes not only pure music aspect but also complex socio-cultural backgrounds. These two-aspects can be defined as CONTENTS or MOVEMENT. Contents culture does not include socio-cultural background. There is no necessity to have authenticity, and it is easy to spread as a mainstream culture via media. On the other hand, when it comes to movement, it requires authenticity or similar background to its members.

For instance, in grime, this event seems a result of grime became pure contents culture and mainstreaming.

There might be a dissociation between grime as MOVEMENT and grime as CONTENTS.

Certainly, music culture does not need to be strongly connected to social movements. However, in the subcultural movement, its members who devote themselves since beginning tend to criticise the culture's commercialising or mainstreaming. It might be because they are afraid of losing its authenticity and original mind-set/spirit they believe.

In these years, the music scene has a huge range of variety, and there is a no longer obvious line between local and mainstream.

c.f. individualism is also one of the aspects of this phenomenon. Artist creates their tunes in a DIY way such as chance the rapper form SoundCloud or Billie Irish she makes her album from her room. To become big/mainstream does no longer require music grown up from a small community to social movement.

#### INTERVIEW

An amateur producer (female) 16 years old

Q Do you feel a difference between the scene you belong to and "grime scene" in the mainstream?

A Yes, I really feel. It is said grime became really mainstream and no longer an underground culture; however, I think there is still local culture.

Q Do you consider that rap culture includes minority spirit? I found many examples from US Hip Hop, of course, grime, and even Japanese local rap culture.

A. I can understand it. That (merging music scene through minority spirit) happened in London around 15 years ago. But It seems these minority minded cultures is quite an old-day thing.

Discussions: She is aiming to be a professional grime producer. She is even 16 years old, but she can attend these tech events, and she can afford to buy mac&software and pieces of equipment. She did not mention how she started to play the music(whether she was already close to local grime community or she found mainstream grime music and inspired by it). However, Because of this phenomenon, It can be understood that grime expands its participants a lot outside of the local community. It shows a big range of grime culture as a pure music scene.



## 7. Authenticities and Identities

FW in London 2018/04/10

Salon: Counter Culture

@Museum of London, Barbican

- How youth culture form and its authenticity

Youth culture tends to be a protest against some authority, which might be mainstream society, high culture, social gap, and so on. Their common theory is "freedom" from these authorities. Alternatively, a negative situation they are in, like the social minority, race, poverty, social class and it sometimes includes drag, outlaw illegal thing. They are not something EVERY counter-culture contain but often mixed up with them.

The authenticity of Youth Culture. It can be paraphrased as originality. Form of culture is always fluid, and then after that culture has grown up, conflict or argument about authenticity often happen.

Authenticity requires that culture still have an original purpose, passion and necessity because that culture might occur with the necessity of protesting or showing something.

On the other hand, having authenticity does not mean it never wants to be mainstream. Original passion might include that they want to make mainstream society(people) pay attention to them. However, when they succeed to get attention from the mainstream, it also means that subculture became a mainstream culture. And then they might lose their authenticity.

Moreover, when it became mainstream, media make their public image. However, that image tends to be different from the authentic (original) style.

Field Note

Two types of Identity

1 Identity looked from outside

"he is a punk" "Black people have a Black identity" ...  
could be labelling, clarifying, just a stereotype

2 Identity formed inside a person

complex = not only 1 community or background  
vague = no exact same identities  
there is no same "grime" identity.

Field Note

Grime artists/ crew claim it is losing its authenticity or purity.

Is it needed?

- that might be natural of subculture.
- Is its original purpose of them to make money and show their existence to the world.

→Yes, but they want to do it with keeping their authenticity...

- In Study aspect

I cannot criticise this change. They are losing a socio-cultural background.

It is also accurate and a fact.

Based on these field notes, there are several discussion about "authenticity" and "identity". If identity means "what makes you yourself", is that needed to be demographic (or ethnographic)? Even grime have distinctive ethnographic root in the suburb of London, and it must be impossible to compare the importance of identities; congenital (can be paraphrased

with ethnographic, demographic, local) identities and acquired identities. In other words, someone who does not share any ethnography with the origin of grime might acquire the authentic identity of grime, if that person genuinely "participate" in the grime scene and share "something" with it.

Grime was born and grown with ethnographical and local identities. However, nowadays, the grime scene has two aspects; mainstreaming group and authenticity focused group. Both have "grime identity" but each if it is transforming. In ordinary cultural studies, it might conclude with "ethnographical identity has authenticity.". However, through this fieldwork and study, it is challenging to deny mainstreaming grime identity. Is only sharing background or ethnographic background proof of authenticity? These two must be some "element" of authenticity. However, there might be some rooms to add more elements to define authenticity. For example, grime's spirit of rebellion can be shared, grime's love for the family and the neighbourhood can be shared, grime's musical characteristics can be shared etc. This sharing cannot form an ethnographic identity, but they can form at least "cultural identity".

How can this "cultural identity" be authentic? That might be the inclusion of the contradiction of "particularity" and "Universality ". These two are usually conflicting. However, it could be just a difference of abstraction. Hence it may be possible for both measures to coexist.

In conclusion, this study intentionally does not conclude which opinion (mainstreaming or local-focus) has an authentic identity of grime. Both have identities in grime culture, but the abstraction of sharing elements can be different. Moreover, both of identity must continuously be changing.

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